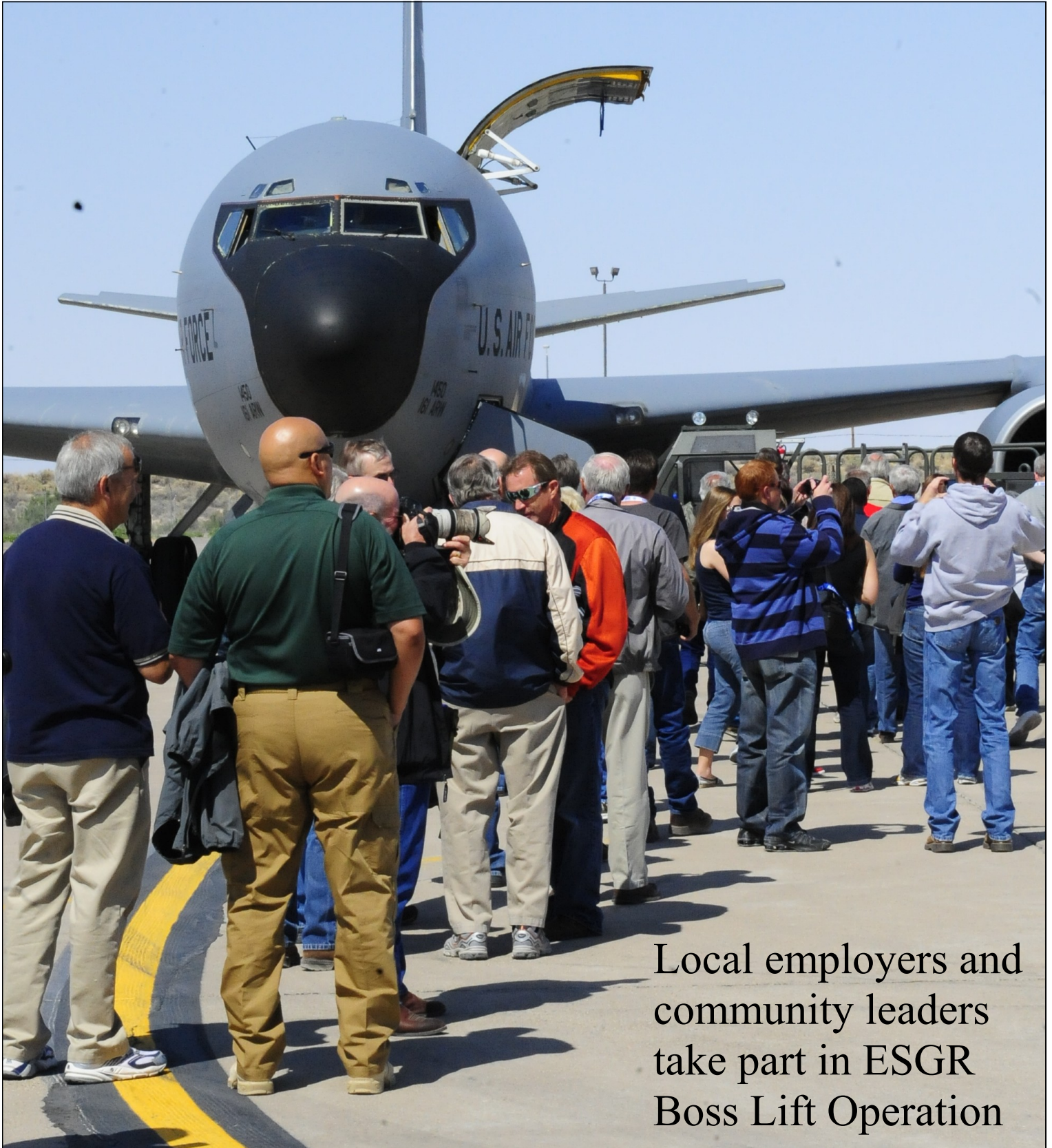


44th Fighter Group

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Local employers and
community leaders
take part in ESGR
Boss Lift Operation

Reserve unit hosts boss lift

Local leaders, employers experience AF mission

By Senior Airman Martha Whipple
44th Fighter Group Public Affairs

New Mexico Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the 44th Fighter Group joined forces to support a boss lift mission here May 14.

About 50 local community leaders and employers climbed aboard a KC-135 Tanker and were treated to a close-up view of the Reserve mission.

The Reserve mission at Holloman covers two areas: supporting the F-22 and remotely piloted aircraft operations, and embedding with active duty counterparts to support the Air Force mission when units are undermanned, budgets are cinched, and operations are accelerated.

"Holloman is the best example of Total Force Integration," said Col. David Krumm, 49th Wing Commander. "Every day Reservist and active duty members work seamlessly to carry out the mission. We can't do it without the Reserve support or the support the community."

He also said during the recent Operational Readiness Inspection, the inspectors could not differentiate between the active duty and Reserve troops. The active duty and Reserve cohesively accomplish the mission, and that could not be done without the support of the local community and employers. The success of Holloman is indicative of the community support and everything they provide to the base, Colonel Krumm said.

The 44th FG commander understands how valuable it is for Reservists to have the support of their employer.

"I applaud the employers of our Reservists," Lt. Col. Scott Crogg, 44th FG commander, said. "These employers make sacrifices to support our mission, and they are an important part of the three-legged stool."

Reservists refer to the three-legged stool as a balance of family, civilian employer and Reserve unit. Without the support of one of the legs, the life of a Reservist is not balanced and the mission falls short. As a way of giving back and showing appreciation for unwav-

ering support and sacrifice, the 44th FG and ESGR conducted a boss lift mission.

Soaring 24,000 feet above Southern New Mexico in a tanker aircraft, the participants experienced the refueling simulation of a fighter mission. T-38 aircraft practiced maneuvers and refueling as passengers watched from every angle.

Passengers gathered around the small windows clicking personal snapshots of their experience. One-by-one, the participants crawled into the boom operation pit. Lying belly down in the small area, passengers were able to see T-38s flying in formations and simulate refueling. Passengers also toured the cockpit. Some passengers donned headsets and experienced the pilots view.

"This is bar none the coolest thing I have ever done," said Mr. Mike Johnson, Alamogordo Daily News managing editor. "I can't describe or put in to words how cool this was."

Mr. Johnson sat directly behind the pilot during the landing and was smiling ear to ear even though he admits to not faring well during take-offs and landings.

The crew of the tanker, an Arizona Air National Guard team, accommodated the boss lift mission to perfection. There were no limits to their service as they allowed the passengers to experience every part of the aircraft, just short of flying it.

Mr. Ybar Duran, a junior high math teacher and basketball coach, said it was an honor to participate in the flight. Mr. Duran had once thought about joining the military. After high school, he took the ASVAB and scored so well on the hydraulics and mechanics portion that recruiters were begging him to join, but at the time he was more interested in girls, low-rider cars and bikes, he said. He learned his destiny was to be a teacher and has been teaching for 18 years. While he didn't take the military route, he is proud of America's Air Force and will continue to support the mission.

After the flight, the ESGR team, community leaders, employers and Team Holloman members gathered for a BBQ lunch.

Lt. Col. Bill Shuert, ESGR program support specialists, thanked everyone for a job well done. He and Len Boulas, ESGR area chairman, presented awards to local area supporters.





Top left: AZ Air National Guard crewmember briefs emergency procedures to area leaders and employers prior to take-off.

Top right: A passenger boards the aircraft through the cockpit hatch.

Left: Mr. Shannon Wright, owner of General Hy-dronics, takes a snapshot of T-38s from the window of a KC-135.

Bottom left: Mr. Michael Shyne, Westsource Corporation owner, gets a view from the boom pit of the aircraft. Passengers had to crawl in and lie belly down in the small space.

Bottom right: a T-38 flies near the wing of the KC-135 tanker during the boss lift mission May 14.

(US Air Force photos by Senior Airman Martha Whipple)





Ms. Margaret Schultz accepts the Patriotic Employer award from ESGR New Mexico committee area chairman Len Boulas during an awards presentation May 14. Ms. Schultz manages Lowe's Pack and Save in Alamogordo. Her son, Senior Airman Jason Schultz, 44th AMDF, who works at Lowe's nominated her for her outstanding support of the Reserve mission. (US Air Force photo by Senior Airman Martha Whipple)



Mr. Gary Kaiser, ESGR program support manager for New Mexico, talks to local area supporters and a Reservist about ESGR. ESGR is a DoD agency that develops and promotes a culture in which local employers support and value the military service of their employees. ESGR recognizes support, increases awareness of the law and resolves conflict through mediation. For more information, log on to www.esgr.mil. (US Air Force photo by Senior Airman Martha Whipple)



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